



# Primaquine Phosphate (Anti-Malarial Medication)

## *What You Need to Know*

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*Deployment Medication Information Sheets (DMIS) are provided by the U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine (USACHPPM). Written for soldiers and their families, they provide basic information on deployment medications that are intended as guidance only; consult your health care provider for more information.*

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### **What is primaquine phosphate?**

Primaquine phosphate tablets are one of several types of drugs to prevent malaria. The type of drug prescribed by a physician will be based on the area of the world you are traveling to and your medical condition.

### **What is malaria?**

Malaria is a serious, but preventable parasitic disease, spread by the bite of an infected mosquito. Symptoms may include shivering followed by high fever, which may be accompanied by confusion, headache, and vomiting. If not treated, symptoms can recur at irregular intervals for many years.

### **How do I take the tablets?**

- ? Take this medication by mouth as directed.
- ? It may be taken with food if stomach upset occurs, but not with antacids.
- ? For best results, take each dose at the same time every day. This will ensure a constant level of medication in your blood.
- ? Take this medication for the full time prescribed. Stopping therapy too soon may result in a reinfection.
- ? Store at room temperature away from sunlight and moisture.
- ? Do not share this medication with others.
- ? Do not donate blood for 3 years after taking it.

### **What does the military require?**

Primaquine phosphate tablets may be required for duty or deployment in areas where there is a risk of contracting malaria. The use of this anti-malarial medication will be based on the degree and length of exposure and the prevalence of drug resistant strains of the disease in the area(s) of travel and an individual's health status.

### **Are there any side effects?**

- ? You may have an upset stomach, stomach cramps, nausea, vomiting, loss of appetite, or muscle weakness, especially during the first several days as your body adjusts to the medication. If any of these effects continue or become bothersome, call your health care provider.
- ? Notify your health care provider if you develop a rash, rapid heart rate, changes in vision, hearing trouble, ringing in the ears, or dark urine while taking this medication.

### **Is there any reason I shouldn't take this medication?**

- ? Tell your doctor if you have any pre-existing blood disorders or a G-6-PD deficiency.
- ? Tell your doctor if you have arthritis, psoriasis, lupus, liver disease or allergies, especially allergies to primaquine.
- ? Tell your health care provider if you're taking any over-the-counter or prescription medicine, especially quinacrine or anticancer medications.

### **What if I'm pregnant or breast-feeding?**

- ? Primaquine should not be administered during pregnancy. Discuss the risks and benefits with your doctor.
- ? It is not known if this medication appears in breast milk. Consult your doctor before breast-feeding.

### **What should I do if I miss a dose?**

If you miss a dose for any reason, take the missed dose as soon as possible and then continue the usual dosing schedule. Do NOT "double-up" on doses.

#### **You *can* avoid getting malaria!**

- ? Eliminate mosquito-breeding sites by emptying water collected in outdoor containers or debris.
- ? Remain in well-screened areas, particularly at dawn, dusk, and early evening when mosquitoes are most active.
- ? Use mosquito nets.
- ? Wear loose clothing that covers most of the body.
- ? Bed nets and tents can also be soaked in or sprayed with permethrin.
- ? For optimum protection, permethrin treated clothing should be worn with DEET repellents on exposed skin.
- ? It is also important to consider the use of insect repellent when traveling in environments with biting insects. The repellent should be applied to any exposed areas of the skin. The most effective compound is DEET (N,N- diethylmetatoluamide), an ingredient in most insect repellents.

**Be sure your medical record shows that you have received this medication.**

### **Where can I get more information?**

- ? Health care provider at your military treatment facility.
- ? CDC Specific Disease web site (for malaria): [www.cdc.gov/health/diseases.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/health/diseases.htm)

#### **DMIS Provided by:**

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